

# Progress Report #8



## Coming Soon: Initial Operating Segment of BRT

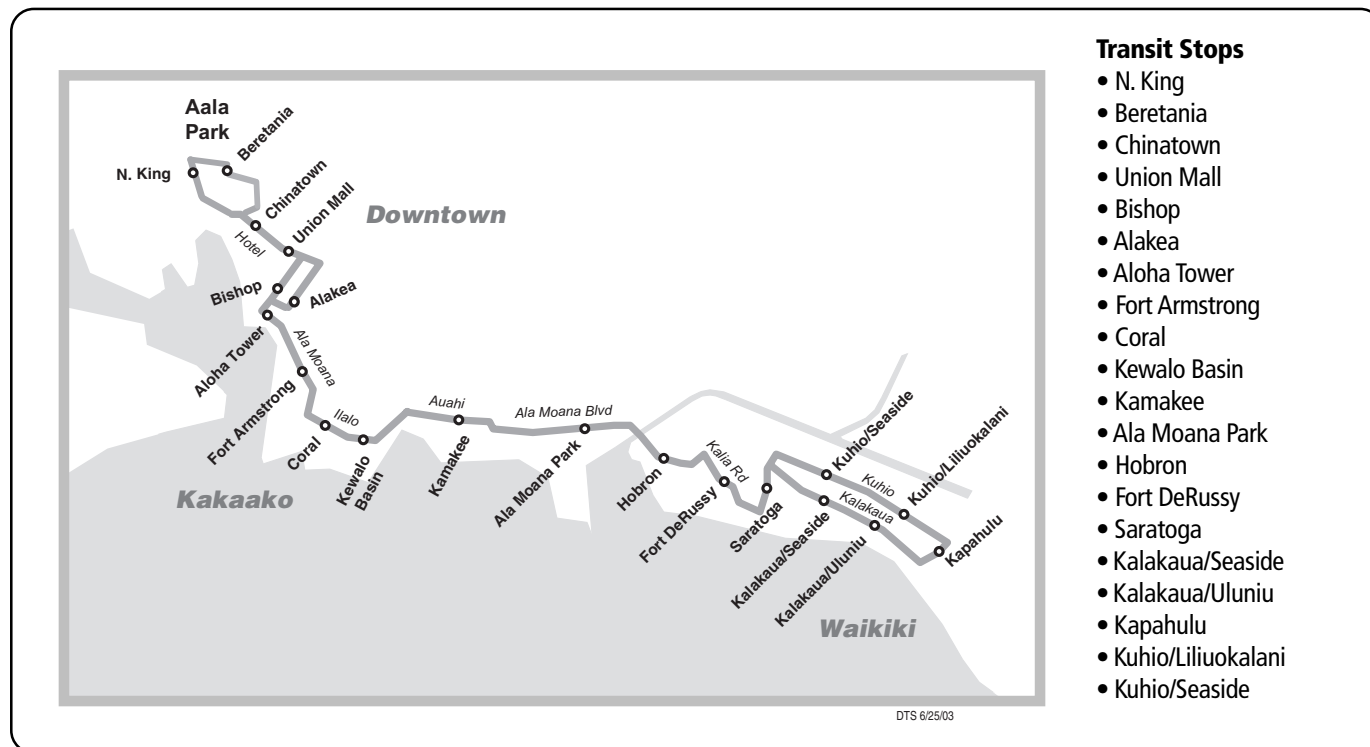
### Initial Operating Segment of BRT will serve Downtown, Kakaako Makai and Waikiki

The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Initial Operating Segment (IOS) is a 5.6-mile high capacity transit route providing frequent service and direct access to major activity destinations and residential neighborhoods. This route will serve Chinatown, the downtown financial district and developments in Kakaako including the new UH medical school, Ala Moana and Waikiki. The IOS will provide convenient connections between BRT, circulator, local and express routes. BRT service will operate every six minutes during peak periods and every ten minutes during off-peak periods.

Transit stops will have more amenities than the typical bus stop with raised platforms for level boarding of vehicles, covered waiting areas with seating, lighting, landscaping, food and newspaper kiosks. Some stops will be provided with electronic signs that indicate wait times for the next vehicle. BRT will initially use hybrid diesel-electric vehicles. All of BRT will be accessible to disabled riders in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### Where will the route go?

In Iwilei and downtown, the IOS will begin at Aala Park, proceed through Chinatown via Hotel and Bishop Streets to Aloha Tower Drive, and continue onto Ala Moana Boulevard. In the Kakaako Makai area, the alignment follows Forrest Avenue and Ilalo Street and then continues to Ward



Avenue, Auahi Street and back onto Ala Moana Boulevard. In Waikiki, the route runs on Kalia and Saratoga Roads to Kalakaua, Kapahulu and Kuhio Avenues.

The IOS will utilize three different types of lanes: *exclusive*, *semi-exclusive*, and *mixed* traffic lanes. *Exclusive* lanes are designated solely for BRT vehicles. *Semi-exclusive* lanes are curbside lanes used by BRT vehicles, public buses and vehicles making right turns. In Waikiki, private buses and trolleys will also be able to use these semi-exclusive lanes. *Mixed* traffic lanes are ordinary lanes used by all vehicles.

Much of the route alignment for the IOS will utilize semi-exclusive and mixed traffic lanes. An exclusive lane created for the IOS will be located on Kalaimoku Street in Waikiki. Semi-exclusive lanes will exist on Auahi Street and Saratoga Road. Kapahulu and Kuhio Avenues will be mixed-flow operations. Ala Moana Boulevard, Kalia Road and Kalakaua Avenue will

utilize both semi-exclusive and mixed traffic lanes. Concurrent with BRT improvements, the City will be widening sidewalks and adding landscaping along Kuhio Avenue to make it more pedestrian friendly.

### When will the IOS be implemented?

Construction for the IOS will begin after EIS approval in a few months. The initial segment is fully funded with City and Federal funds. Future project phases are dependent upon additional appropriations. Passenger service for the IOS will begin in 2005.

Implementation of the total BRT project will be phased over 14 years. Future phases include the remainder of the In-Town segment which will run through Kalihi, Kakaako Mauka, and UH-Manoa. The Regional BRT will run from Middle Street to Kapolei. Appropriations by the City Council and a commitment of Federal matching funds will be required for the balance of the project.

## Inside

**IMPROVEMENTS:** Changes to project reflected in improved FEIS **Page 2**

**IMPLEMENTATION:** Timeline for implementation of BRT **Pages 2-3**

**CHANGES:** Public review period results in refinements to BRT **Page 3**

**IN-TOWN:** Benefits of building In-Town BRT first **Page 3**

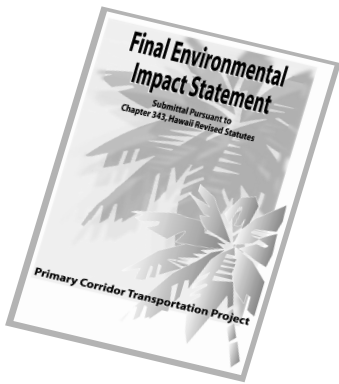
**SPECIFICS:** Engineering improvements with BRT **Back Page**

**MAYOR'S MESSAGE:** **Back Page**

For more information, call 527-6978 or visit the project website at [www.oahutrans2k.com](http://www.oahutrans2k.com)

**City and County of Honolulu**  
Jeremy Harris, Mayor

**Department of Transportation Services**  
Cheryl Soon, Director  
Keoki Miyamoto, Deputy Director



# Federal Final Environmental Impact Statement Released

The Federal Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Primary Corridor Transportation Project (also known as Bus Rapid Transit) was issued August 8, 2003. Public comments will be accepted on the FEIS until September 8, 2003. Written comments should be submitted to Director Cheryl Soon at the Department of Transportation Services. The State Final Environmental Impact Statement, which was completed to comply with State of Hawaii environmental requirements, was accepted by Governor Cayetano in November of 2002.

## Environmental Impact Statement process

The purpose of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process is to identify potential impacts and benefits resulting from a project. State and Federal laws require an EIS for major projects such as the Primary Corridor Transportation Project.

The Major Investment Study/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (MIS/DEIS) for the project was issued in August 2000. A Supplemental Draft EIS was subsequently prepared in March 2002 to include major refinements adopted after the completion of the MIS/DEIS. These refinements were the recommendations made by community members during the Working Group process in 2001-2002 and approved

by the City Council. Major refinements included shifting the In-Town BRT alignment from Ward Avenue to Pensacola Street, adding a new Kakaako Makai route, and adding a freeway access ramp at Luapele Drive.

## About the FEIS

The State Final Environmental Impact Statement includes copies of all comments received on the MIS/DEIS and SDEIS, as well as the City's letters responding to those comments. Common topics in the comments included costs and methods of financing

## Changes reflect agency & public comments

The SDOT expressed concerns about the cost effectiveness of building direct access BRT ramps at Kapolei, Kunia, and Middle Street. Since the SDOT has existing and planned interchanges at these locations that will provide the BRT with access to the H-1 express lanes, they saw no need for additional construction in these areas. In response, the FEIS shows these direct ramps removed, reducing impacts at these locations and saving \$166 million in 2002 dollars.

The SDEIS showed a park-and-ride facility located at Kunia/Fort Weaver Road. In response to concerns about increasing congestion in an already over-crowded area and concerns from SDOT about cost effectiveness, the park-and-ride facility will instead be

FEIS HIGHLIGHTS	Refined BRT	Without BRT (No-Build)
Daily Transit Trips within the Primary Corridor	312,570 Linked Trips	261,130 Linked Trips
Daily Mode Share of Work Trips within the Primary Corridor	22.6%	19.2%
Daily Revenue Bus Miles	84,450	62,560
Comfort Level (Passengers Per Seat)	0.90	1.31
Transit Travel Time, Kapolei to Downtown	58.2 minutes	83.1 minutes
Direct & Indirect Jobs Created	9,418 person-years	704 person-years

*Note: Projections for the year 2025*

the BRT, traffic and transportation issues, community and social concerns, and anticipated ridership.

In addition to written responses to comments and letters, DTS responded to concerns from the community and the State Department of Transportation (SDOT) by including some refinements and clarifications in the FEIS. While not materially altering the project, these modifications address community concerns by decreasing the impacts and costs of the BRT.

constructed next to North-South Road. North-South Road is an SDOT project with a new interchange onto H-1, and can be designed to accommodate traffic generated by the park-and-ride facility.

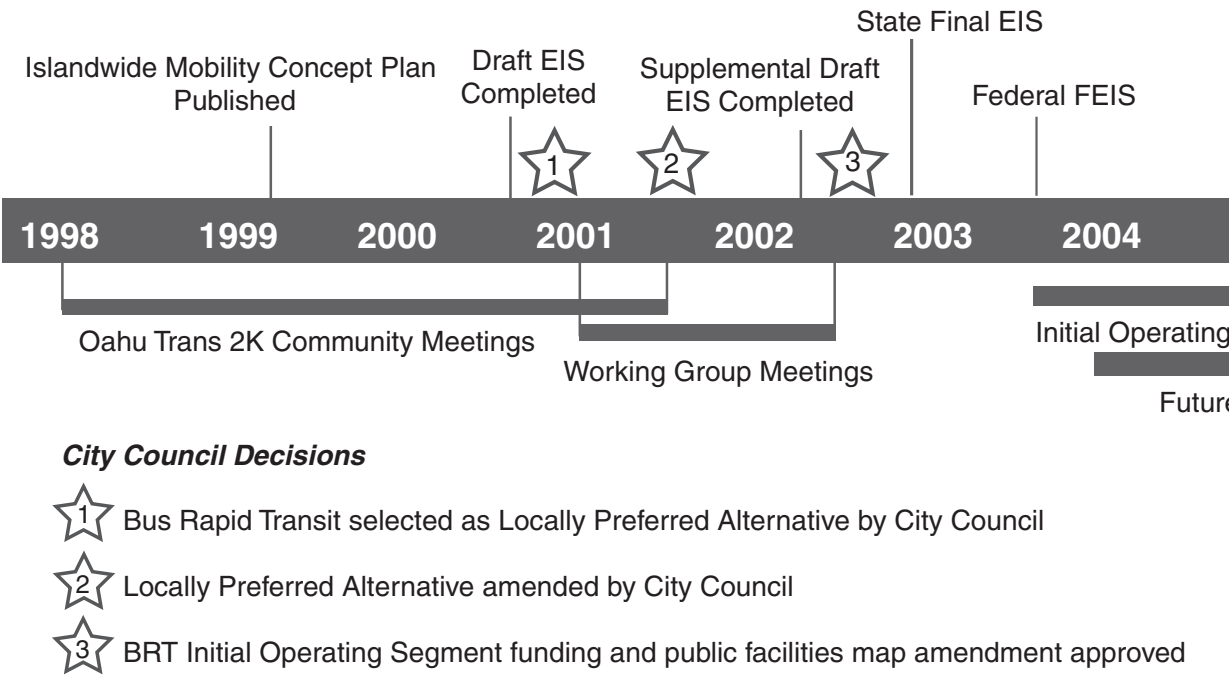
The Hawaii Community Development Authority informed DTS that it was planning to realign Forrest Avenue, as opposed to realigning Channel Street, to connect with Ilalo Street in Kakaako. Therefore, DTS reflected the change from the use of Channel Street to the use of Forrest Avenue for the Kakaako Makai Branch of the In-Town BRT in the FEIS.

continued on next page

## Bus Rapid Transit Project Timeline

Honolulu's BRT project was born in the Oahu Trans 2K community meetings that began in late 1998. Since that time, the Department of Transportation Services has continued with community and working group meetings, planning and engineering, and environmental studies.

This timeline summarizes the past, present, and future of the project, including important City Council decisions, the extensive Environmental Impact Statement process, and implementation of the Regional and In-Town systems.



The public and elected officials expressed concern about using exclusive lanes for operation of the In-Town BRT on Kapiolani Boulevard between Pensacola Street and Atkinson Drive. Ridership information indicates that during the early years of the In-Town BRT operation, exclusive lanes will not be necessary. In response to these findings, DTS is planning to use semi-exclusive curb lanes during peak-periods in the early years of the In-Town BRT, with exclusive center lanes being phased into use when needed in the future. With this timing adjustment, DTS is able to address the concerns of the community about losing the existing peak-period contra-flow operation on Kapiolani Boulevard.

Language clarifications

The SDEIS showed H-1 Express/HOV lanes in the median between Kapolei and the Managers Drive end of the zipper lane. The FEIS clarifies that this improvement, while used by BRT buses, is actually a separate project to be constructed and funded by the SDOT.

Finally, the FEIS indicates that DTS will delay making a decision on BRT technology. The SDEIS explored options of both Embedded Plate Technology and Hybrid-Electric vehicles. Since the Embedded Plate Technology is not yet service-proven, DTS has decided to proceed with the project using hybrid vehicles until Embedded Plate Technology is further developed, tested, and certified. A decision will be made in 2008 whether or not to convert to the all-electric Embedded Plate system.

Community input creates better BRT

These five changes and clarifications discussed in the State FEIS were initiated by public comments on the SDEIS. The Federal FEIS also includes these same changes. Upon release of the FEIS, there will be a thirty-day period prior to the issuance of the record of decision for the IOS. During this period, DTS will accept comments on the FEIS. A separate record of decision will be needed to construct the remainder of the BRT system.

*The Bus Rapid Transit project team wishes to thank community organizations and businesses, elected officials, and individuals for their input. Their contributions have helped to make BRT a better project for our City.*

Public Review Results in Better BRT

Refinements to the BRT project came about as a response to comments and community issues that were raised during the SDEIS public review period. Physical modifications to the BRT alignment are reflected in an FEIS that provides clarity for the project, assesses potential impacts, and justifies the City’s approach to the refinements. Improvements and reasons for the improvements are outlined below.

Improvement	Reason
Relocate Kunia Road Park-and-Ride to North-South Road	Lessened Traffic Congestion
Eliminate BRT Ramps at Kapolei, Kunia & Middle Street	\$166 Million Saved
Reroute In-Town BRT from Channel Street onto Forrest Avenue	Conforms to New Development in Kakaako
Semi-Exclusive vs. Exclusive Lanes on Kapiolani Boulevard	Improved Traffic Flow
Delay Decision on Embedded Plate Technology (EPT)	Further Development and Testing Needed

Why In-Town BRT first?

Why not build Regional BRT first? While the Regional BRT would alleviate daily gridlock on H-1, the terminus for the Regional sytem is Middle Street. Middle Street in itself is not a destination. An In-Town BRT infrastructure must first be built to support Regional BRT development and ensure a smooth transition to town destinations. Furthermore, the State’s H-1 widening project must be coordinated with BRT zipper lane and ramp improvements and is two years away from construction. The people of Oahu concur that improvements must be made now. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding for the Initial Operating Segment is

already appropriated by the City Council. Communities and businesses support In-Town BRT because it will connect areas not presently well served by transit such as the waterfront and Kakaako. In addition, the In-Town branch will promote a pedestrian-friendly environment. It is viable as a stand-alone BRT route, relatively easy to construct, cost-effective, and can be implemented immediately. In-Town BRT is truly the best solution to Oahu’s traffic congestion!



The Civic is an example of Hybrid-Electric BRT Technology



Initial Operating Segment

Proposed BRT Implementation Schedule

- Initial Operating Segment: Iwilei to Waikiki via Kakaako Makai
- In-Town Section 2: Kalihi
- In-Town Section 3: Downtown to UH-Manoa
- In-Town Section 4: Kakaako Mauka
- Regional BRT: Middle Street to Kapolei



## CITY IMPROVEMENTS: IN-TOWN BRT

- ➔ 29 new BRT stations
- ➔ 20 repaved streets
- ➔ 4 widened streets
- ➔ 4 streets with improved sidewalks
- ➔ 12 streets with new ADA curb ramps
- ➔ Concrete bus lanes
- ➔ Landscaping improvements on all streets
- ➔ Undergrounding of select utilities



*Proposed landscaping along  
South King Street*



*Proposed Post Office Station  
on King Street*

## Mayor's Message

Transportation is one of the most pressing challenges in our community. I want to thank Governor Lingle for inviting me to participate in discussions about how to reach lasting consensus and commitment to meet this challenge.



It is agreed that while we seek longer term improvements, other efforts must go forward. We will continue to add shelters, traveler information, and equipment to our excellent bus system. The BRT is another way to enhance the bus system by improving travel times consistently through all times of day. This frequent and dependable service can complement any other mode chosen in the future--be it rail, ferry or any other transit.

The City stands ready to work with our State and Federal partners to take a long term perspective on traffic. We look forward to the wider dialogue in the community that will follow.

**Jeremy Harris, Mayor**



Department of Transportation Services  
650 South King Street Third Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813